TREASON CANTOS
POEMS 2014-2017
Catherine B. Krause

Treason Cantos

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v1.00

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April
Originally published at Red Booth Review

The next day is always hard,
remembering chocolate pie
and the poem's meaning,
trying not to lose your gifts:

a birthday suit extension,
a new morning gown,
a top-heavy woman's top,
lukewarm coffee,
cut your hand shaving.

The computer is a tool
bred out from the earth
for higher purposes than
using the desire to lose.

baseball on the radio
Originally published at Uut Poetry

yesterday baseball was on the radio
but i hate baseball games they annoy me so much
the announcers and the crowd and the static
so i went to turn it off but it was already off
and the game was still playing
why don't you make the most of it asked one of the elves
buy yourself a hot dog but i couldn't do it
hot dogs are people

The Bible as a Feminist-Friendly Boyfriend
Originally published at Uut Poetry

I consider myself a feminist he says,
holding the door and pulling my chair out.
We all know I'm the one who has to ask you
for what you have to give me. But don't give it up tonight,
respect yourself. You'll give me plenty when we're married.
I'd like to work all day for you and let you stay at home,
with only some chores to do and some children to raise,
so you'll never have to worry about important things,
because you're a treasure, because you're special.
I want to give you everything you desire, he says:
nice dresses, respectable ones, not too slutty
because I don't want anyone's eyes on you,
sewing needles, the most delicious food to cook,
a selection of lingerie that I think you would really love
to wear around me, and a son named after me.
You'll be a queen in my house, I'll be the king,
and we will be partners in the covenant of the Lord,
listening equally to what He wants each of us to do.

casualties
Originally published in Fusion: Ohio's Advocate for LGBT Issues

we were both starting hormones
then you were dead

you're better than the world that survived you
you shouldn't have let it get to you

you should've given it time
i'm a lot happier now

but you're not
we've all grown up and gotten better

but you haven't
and we need you as much as ever

Church of Nothing

Originally published as "The Church of Nothing" in The Opiate, Spring 2016, Vol. 5, p. 43.

Don't worry about it. Tell no one.
One foot in front of the other,
as fast as you can. "What's wrong?"
"Nothing's wrong. It's fine. Don't
worry." Give your throat a wash,
get it nice and clean. You'll
need to relieve the pressure.
Join the pack! There's strength
in numbers, if you're one of them, but
you don't chase rabbits down tunnels
and rip them apart. You're the rabbit,
and you know it. Keep calm, now.
Find yourself a hole to crawl into.
Drown yourself, blow up your heart.
It's too late.

Cosmetinaut
Originally published at onesentencepoems.com

She covers her arms and legs
with lye every day,
burning and itching and thinking
"I'm gonna look so good."

damned if you don't
Originally published in Fusion: Ohio's Advocate for LGBT Issues
Conceptual translation of the below Esperanto poem

licking his lips
he stares at the box
the contents are hidden

it's hard to pull off but it keeps you safe
as long as he doesn't unwrap you

Tie ĉi malbone
Originally published in Penseo, issue 287

—laŭ ĉinesko Dekses-Silabo

vir'
rigardanta kun dezir'
ne scias,
ke mi estas kvir'.

ĉi
kaŝo gardas min (defi'
malsimpla)
de la transfobi'.

mal'
de la beno de vual':
post lerno
pri sana detal',

ĉu
tia ĉi individu'
ĝentila
afablados plu,

aŭ
ĉu mi, pro bola baldaŭ'
forkuru
al la malantaŭ'?

Dare to Be Different: Rip Your Face Off
Originally published in Degenerates: Voices for Peace, Bullying Edition, p. 12.

Light your face on fire with the end of a cigarette.
Cut the edges, rip it off; are you a bad enough dude?
They say you're harming yourself, but if that were true,
why would it be the hot new trend that everyone was doing?

Nietzsche says that anyone who won't is a weak inferior born servant,
at least I think that's what he says, but the only thing I ever read
was 4chan's /pol/ 'cause it's the edgiest thing when a cat jumps off
a cliff to catch an invisible mouse he read about on Breitbart,

falling into a hole and blaming those feminists and immigrants
(I knew it was them, even when it was the queers,
and the smoke alarm went off because Jews were trying to cuck me
and give my toothbrush to trannies who didn't even deserve it.)

donald trump
Originally published in Fusion: Ohio's Advocate for LGBT Issues

i see donald trump on tv
and i say i am glad
i am not donald trump
but really i wish i had
never been
that kind of monster

Donald Trump Congratulates Himself on the Crucifixion of Jesus
Originally published at socialjusticepoetry.com

I got up from the bench
I was sleeping on in DuPont Circle,
cleaned up, bought new makeup and new clothes,
grew breasts, endured attacks
by conspiracies of friends and strangers,
and walked back to the circle
where there were half-naked people,
corporate sponsors, and a bigoted preacher screaming,
"You abominations should be ashamed of yourselves!"
so I lifted my shirt up and shook my new breasts
as close to his face as I could through the wall of police officers
defending his free speech instead of our right to be safe from harassment,
mocked him and heckled him, ridiculed him, laughed at his beliefs,
and then, the next day, a bigot in another city
made me want to lie back down,
but I couldn't, because I had things to do,
people to see, and only 24 hours.

Don't Forget These 5 Lifehacks When Monsters Eat the Corners of the Earth
Originally published at Uut Poetry

I lift my nose up from the pile to ask, “Are you still beating holes in the crackpot you swam up the stream to engender?” You tell me not to be so serious. Bacteria say hello to each other when they pass, exchanging small talk and genomes. I hope the space emperor will grant us asylum before our planet is devoured by his henchmen. Everything will work out just fine; I know because I read the writing in the sand and swallowed a great fish that fed me for a lifetime.

Eleven
Originally published at Uut Poetry

In a time vortex
we are catapults,
eins zwei drei,
cannons over the white lead,
right left sails hoy[…]
garbage dormitories
sandle the back
of Twitter rants
at five in the morning
in the backroads of Nepal
where not even your red cups
will be enough
to save the universe
from forgetting us.

Fine
Originally published in The Opiate, Spring 2016, Vol. 5, p. 45.

Yes,
everything is fine.

[first down]
Originally published in Rabbit Ears: TV Poems (NYQ Books, 2015), p. 222.

first down
BUY A CAR
second down
GET SOME BEER
third down
ASK YOUR DOCTOR IF VIAGRA IS RIGHT FOR YOU
fourth down

From June 2015 in LGBTQ History
Originally published in Beltway Poetry Quarterly, Volume 17:2, Spring 2016

Being a fetish,
defining poetry:
just another weekend
with my Brilliant Odor.

I read his fuzzy body
what I wrote about his mind.
He tugs the leash I'm holding
with his neck to shut me up.

I'd compose a different suite
with this dog and his two cats,
giving him treats on demand
from my cage atop his pedestal.

Watching my parallel bench-bum,
not far away from the hospital,
I've found a reason to sell out:
now sleep is finally possible.

The Gay Neo-Fascist's Rant
Originally published in Pøst-, Issue 1.3.

I'll pound all your asses and faces,
you cultural Marxist liberal cucks
who think just because I like sex with men,
I should care about anyone else but myself.

It's PC for the virtuous queer to cry tears
for the little guy himself,
but that faggot's not me;
in fact my contempt for those queens only grows
when I picture their empathy,
picture that weak little shivering runt who I'm not:
I don't mean a boy but a hairy old man (he's not me)
who needs poppers and Viagra to move his limp dick.

You think just because I climbed up off your backs
I should care about helping you up like I promised?
I'll pound all your asses and faces,
you cultural Marxist liberal cucks.

Goals
Originally published at onesentencepoems.com
Translation of the Esperanto poem below

Mom's goal was to graduate college
but dad's goal was mom.

Celo
Originally published at onesentencepoems.com

La celo de panjo estis diplomitiĝi
sed la celo de paĉjo estis panjo.

The Herd

Originally published in cc&d magazine volume 253, Jan/Feb 2015

The ruthless beaks of the chickens, the ravenous appetites of the mother rodents, the giant erect cocks of the elephants congregating around the watering hole to exchange gossip.

Here’s Why This Stunning Visual of Goddess Kali Is Giving People Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Originally published at Uut Poetry, later in Gargoyle 65 under the name Valeria Numinosa

Whatever happened to the invisible hunger in the sky?
One moment I’m scratching your initials under my desk;
the next I’m being stalked by a Turkish-speaking man named Tom.
Seven customs officers didn’t bother to read
when I passed them a slip declaring two kilos of cocaine
hidden in the vortex of my soul. This is not to brag,
just to prove that I exist.

Home Is Where They Say "Pop"
Originally published at Uut Poetry

I was born forty minutes from where Mike Pence was born;
a settler with a puffy white beard took me to school
until I was 8 years old. Less than two years later,
I began to experience symptoms of "Ace Ventura, Pet Detective"
and a pamphlet stating, "The humanitarian vision of
liberalism can only arise under the growing corps
of religious nationalist youth signing up for army
service after studying at Bob Jones University," or
something like that. What did I ever do to deserve
your lap-nest, oh towers of Canada who stand at
the border of this natural mecca in the ghetto,
taunting me with dreams of free health care
and the rebirth of all the martyrs of the Holocaust?

Seed text:
Goliath: Life and Loathing in Greater Israel by Max Blumenthal, pp. 310-311.

How I Spent My Immobilizing Year-Long Depression
Originally published at Uut Poetry

I am in the lobby of an upscale office building, and the fate of the world rests on me. I run on four legs past the cocks in suits who are swaying back and forth and talking about the presidential debates in that recognizably paternalist tone, and scuttle into the elevator, where I jump up and hide in between the ceiling and the material that is peeling off it. A couple of suits come into the elevator, then leave. I run out and there is a big round desk where a woman is typing. I jump up over the desk, so she can see me, and wave, so she gets up and walks out. I go over to her desk, and there is a full sandwich bar. I make myself a sandwich with onions, pickles, jalapeños, banana peppers, lettuce, tomatoes, radishes, olives, and mustard. I eat the sandwich. I am saved.

How to Be the Exact Opposite of Ezra Pound
Originally published at Uut Poetry

1. Admit you are fully irrational and accept responsibility for it.
2. Buy a Chinese-English dictionary, select a random word, and put its literal English translation into the poem you're writing.
3. Use the benefits of obscurity to satisfy marginalized stomachs.
4. Prefer hearing popular songs sung in overflowing unison to reading endless sheet music in the library.
5. Vote against Donald Trump, then blame your busy self for not doing enough when the world still ends up going to shit.
6. Stay in places where you don't feel you belong and reach contentment by helping whoever needs and asks for it.
7. Immediately distrust anything purporting to uncover that a marginalized group is somehow ruling the world and hiding the truth from everyone.
8. Have contempt for individuals who try to show off their tolerance by forgiving you on behalf of anyone other than themselves.

Seed text: Page 108 of Collins Beginner's Chinese Dictionary, First Edition. Translations incorporated: fully, buy, satisfy, overflow, endless, busy, reach, hide the truth, show off.

I Agree With Your Position But Condemn Your Attempts to Escape It
Originally published at Uut Poetry

I am eighteen celebrating my thirty-third year. I throw a tomato at the wall to see if it still works before going to unfamiliar places alone. This is something I intended to stop doing five years ago, I claim, but the plan was always to flip time to keep myself from going under. Cryptocurrency is exciting to the wires chewed up by weasels but not my trajectory, a seething hymn walking backwards through Neptune’s history. That’s how you know an addict is lying, when their mouth is a painting of Marilyn Monroe with Bette Davis’s name on it.

Identity Plush
Originally published at Uut Poetry

My sickness out of sync with the wonderbars,
the cackling of the Super Soaker
(messes) with my fishskin
as the old saying goes, like coffee
on the rainbow road of Gilgamesh:
flavored, individually wrapped,
and tossed into the sea.

If I Were a Dolphin I Would Spend All My Time on a Shower Curtain
Originally published at Uut Poetry

If I were an octopus I would swim sideways to show off my figure to my girlfriend as the clownfish hummed My Favorite Things to the tune of a space heater with the elves getting in my way and my credit being pre-approved by bottle-nosed aliens, the public nuissances who dream chocolate creamsicles every time Catwoman gets drunk with Eric Theiss and remembers her electrolytes under the wafers of capitalism, the deafening sound of your final catalog, and the shoestring fries from the freezer in your shadow.

The Insider's Guide to Washington, D.C.
Originally published at Uut Poetry

Sitting on the curb across from Starbucks
smoking scooby and drinking cheap vodka
with Francis the homeless rock artist,
I blink and the shops become a gender-neutral
way to write Hebrew. I don't think you've ever
known hard times, said my father, and I hope
you never will. Penguins congregate around
DuPont Circle Fountain for a flash mob.
Let's get married, says Francis. Why not?
I empty my wisdom into the ground behind
China Daily and say, Teach me to panhandle.
The wind herds me into a diner where the cooks
don't think I understand Spanish. Está haciendo
la poesía, they joke when I break wind.
Later that night, Shakespeare visits me and tries
to sell me a bag of Tina successfully.
I bite my thumb behind his back as he exits.
Three days later, in a room full of pigs
rescued from factory farms by the Holy Spirit,
I pour my insincerity into their books.

Kristallnacht 2019
Originally published in Fusion: Ohio's Advocate for LGBT Issues

find yourself a job
across the lake or the ocean
or the river doesn't matter
and as bad as it gets
don't come back for me
i will be fine

List of Things That Weren't Normal Before 2017
Originally published at Uut Poetry

1
A shoe fell on my head
and ten other shoes followed its lead.
The first shoe condemned them
and praised me for standing up
after ten shoes to the head.
Eleven, I said, eleven shoes,
and he told me not to politicize things.

2
Against all expectations,
I turned thirty-two
and the glass lid of a pot shattered
across my chest and onto the countertop.

3
I've been shouting at my landlord's lawn all year;
its resolve is only getting stronger.
I blame the selfies and participation trophies,
although no one has ever been clear on why
their car slid off the side of a cliff,
but if anything is guilty, it's his lawn.

4
Every time I go outside there are politicians
ranting at me, which is normal enough,
but they don't usually word their rants
as abstract poetry. There is a war on Dada
waged by people who use the methods of Dada
from their iambic towers on the edge of Central Park.

5
On a mountaintop, the beast from the Dark Crystal
cried that I wasn't paying attention.
I began my ascent, thinking always
that the mountain would be better than the ground,
but all it did was make me hate the ground more
after my inevitable descent into a peanut butter and jelly.

Literally Ironic
Originally published at Uut Poetry

Sifting through my hair, I find the last snowmobile left on Earth and ride it.
My foot on my knee, I aspire to creative underpants without leaving the flies alone.
The buzzing of the fan is constant and the clock is ticking my name out in morse code.
This may not be the summit but it’s the only place I can hold onto.

Lonely Room
Originally published in Star82 Review 4.1

no one can
see *me* here
in this box

My Ex-Partner
Originally published in The Opiate, Spring 2016, Vol. 5, p. 44.

My ex-partner profited off the Napoleonic wars.
They insisted that their shoelaces were tied.
Their moon was the size of a pair of blue eagles
And they couldn't construct a proper cheesecake.
I sat and listened to their droning about Neptune,
Felt their long whiskers pat me on the back
As if I could afford to drink ginger tea.
Their dog whistled sweet nothings into the void.
Everyone loved them except for you.
You didn't know how to play the triangle.
That's why I left them for your house of books.
Don't you understand? They were an octopus,
And you were always seventeen minutes away
From the pit of an avocado's frustration.

My Nightmare
Originally published in Right Hand Pointing Issue 77.

Zeke the Plumber
is outside my window
and he won't stop singing
"Born This Way."

To the Next-Door Neighbor
Originally published at socialjusticepoetry.com

I'm glad you think I'm pretty
and I really did like
the little ceramic cup with my name on it,
but you voted to zap me straight and cis,
deport the scared closeted trans girl
with no memory of the country she was born in,
take away our health care,
send the harmless theology student in Ohio
who loved to talk Semitic linguistics
and the guy down the street who hosted the car wash
for the Red Cross the Sunday after 9/11
into a war zone of America's creation
that your vote has only worsened,
and enable a confessed sexual predator
who thinks it's me and the people I love
who shouldn't be allowed in public restrooms,
so you can love the sinner from a distance.

On A Cosmic Level, Everyone Is A Puppy
Originally published at Uut Poetry

Cleaning, you found a note jotted down after a dream:
"Holocaust metaphor slasher film." When did you write this,
And why didn't you read it the next day and get to work?
Like, the C# book on your shelf from 2005. Had you started reading it then,
How good could you have gotten at spying on Windows 10 users?
Maynard James Keenan won't return your requests to teach him Latin,
But how did you not realize he liked to whistle before you got him alone?

Or In Biblical Terms
Originally published at Uut Poetry

The black cat intrudes upon my daydream,
walks to the window to peer at the darkness.
I carelessly messed up the tenses of my poem.
Naked men gazed from both sides as I defecated.
Something tells me I’m not on the land bridge anymore.

President Baby Syndrome
Originally published at Uut Poetry

Why am I 31,
Vicki-cat,
and why are you always taking
my seat next to reason?
I thought I'd composed the greatest
one-word poem ever written,
come to find out you say it
when the door is shut. It's OK, Vicki-cat,
if you don't want to meet my partner,
even when it's 2016,
but whatever happened to you as a kitten,
I had nothing to do with it.
I wasn't there.

The Problem with Holidays
Originally published at socialjusticepoetry.com

They're hard on seven hundred fifty-seven dollars a month. Pennies must be squeezed instead of wished on. Big stores induce quick escapes and fits of heavy breathing, but the small and cheap ones are nice when there aren't too many people who stare. They used to mock and beat you, now they hand you their number because they don't know who you really are. It'd be over if they found out, so it's best when there's no crowd. If Amazon treated their workers like humans, then the Internet would be what you used to think it was, but they don't, and you know what that's like. That's the problem, I guess.

9 Reasons Latin Wouldn't Work As An International Language In The 21st Century

Originally published at Uut Poetry

The main problem with getting everyone to learn Latin in the 21st century
is that you never show up to class because you're sitting naked in your dormroom
eating Vortex Flakes, repeatedly adding milk until you run out and realize
the semester's almost over and you've missed every test so far,
so you have less a chance of passing than you do of quitting smoking
after lighting up your first cigarette in years, but as you're smoking it
and walking to class you suddenly trip and fall into your bed,
ten years later, with nothing to show except your pretty new body
and a newfound ability to refrain from inhaling vapors through a glass pipe.

rebranding
Originally published in 1947 Journal

i got us a hotel
& i bought you rope
that i trusted your virtue with

i cried —STOP
you ignored me, said
—not so loud if you want to be free again

you burned permanent scars
with your cigarettes
in between where i'd grow my tits

but they're nicer than yours
plus your ugly inkjob's worse
and you asked for it

The Same Earth
Originally published at Uut Poetry

You came back last night, looking like you did back then.
You told me to stop lying, that I had asked for it.
I screamed and screamed but no sound emerged from my mouth.
Then you did it again, as bad as ever.

Scriptation 2
Originally published in Eunoia Review
Computer-generated

Story at the levers
that growls at steep hill.
It is Christmas music.

Scriptation 5
Originally published in Eunoia Review
Computer-generated

one anothership is our body

The Season
Originally published at onesentencepoems.com

In a summer when the sun is so hot
that your old car's air conditioner
is useless for the first several minutes that it's on
so you have to roll down the windows,
would you like to have sex in the swimming pool?

Sensitive Persephone
Originally published in The Opiate, Spring 2016, Vol. 5, p. 44.

The Queen of Hades loves to be felt up,
all the more by Pluto's cold dead hands; she
isn't a teenage girl, but she knows her likes,
and being played by DJ Dīs is one.

When Springtime rolls around, she feels deprived.
Flowers notwithstanding, life is lifeless.
Certainly no grown woman should live with Mom;
it's better to be in the world to come.

Nonetheless, lifelessness also can liven our misery:
Cora leaves for Hades, hence the leaves die,
coloring bitter yet beautiful, decadent Autumn like
the lovely candy rotting all our teeth,
exactly like how Pluto's winter bride
loves his deadly touch upon her nipples.

she was in the way
Originally published at Uut Poetry

she was in the way of our bulldozer & rockets were flying everywhere & she herself personally wanted to drive us into the sea, could you imagine what the Syrians would have done in a similar situation, we couldn't let her bring about another holocaust, we have the right to defend ourselves, you're only bringing this up because you're a self-hating Jew anyway & the muslims want to rule the world, think of our survival as a people & think of the children & besides she was probably just pretending to be progressive until she was old enough to move into a nice house and have children and vote Republican & now she can't and that's not our fault we've cleared ourselves of all wrongdoing

Space Ex for Virgins
Originally published in Mary: A Journal of New Writing, Winter 2017 issue.

I
I was screaming at a banana when a man I had never met appeared, arms folded, telling me he was my ally come to instruct me in the art of reasoned discourse. I had no time to check with High Command to determine whether his claims were genuine, so we watched Steven Universe for weeks. The Foo Fighters had taken up residence in my head to my dismay, and I woke up seemingly every hour more sure than ever before the world was disintegrating. Glaciers receded and returned, crushing the hunter-gatherers in their paths. This is exactly like the time before, but the Earth will never heal from the psychic trauma.

II
Services rendered include 3D animation, bugs on my skin, a Hibernian sonata, my hero's clever turn of persuasion, a fickle testament to the salad of time, and a Wells Fargo close to Capitol Hill where I was paid to destroy the country by sitting in a chair. The man sitting next to me in Dirksen looks down on Esperanto, believes it was invented by the UN as a conspiracy against American leadership. I tell him the UN had nothing to do with it, or try to, but he's disappeared now that it's time to be paid and my usual boss is angry at me for not being able to find him and intends to prosecute me. It was all a misunderstanding. The UN had nothing to do with it. My client is a cactus.

III
It's always when the elves have gone away that you miss them the most, or so I'm told. I tried searching for their dust once and ended up on Jupiter, who told me I was trash and to slap his face. Rome has been kind to the buzzwords over the years, the ambient charlatans whisking their way onto the face of a five-dollar bulletin full of anti-Semitic canards. "I’ve never seen anything like this before," I tell my friends, but they're trying to watch the movie.

IV
After the revolution I will live in Kalorama again but this time I won't be working for food and a bed and the homeless will occupy every condo eating nothing but the best food if we cook it ourselves and we do what we can to help out and no one will use us to bolster their image with the yuppie left while starting slush companies in our names avoiding accountability with intermediaries who just needed a place to get out of the cold and when it's nice and warm I'll go to the park and I'll look at the flowers and write.

Starving Mutts Bring Down the Twin Towers
Originally published at Uut Poetry

Starving mutts bring down the Twin Towers.
Logic on the waves of the real.
A pause.

Underlying subtexts sub the text.
It's time to put on my big girl
panties and stop boiling the ruby-red pot.
Pigs in their outfits too small,
bellies hanging out,
skirts unwashed,
boils on their skin.

This is not computer-generated
unless you consider
that the mind is schizophrenic.

Stellar
Originally published at onesentencepoems.com

Early in the morning on my birthday,
a couple days after our first Seder without her at the table,
she lifts her narrow-ruled hand to the sky and exhales.

– for Stella

The Taming of Life
Originally published at Uut Poetry

I know that I'm going to need laserbeams
if I ever hope to conquer your book.
I know a clown in the stomach
is worth seventeen hundred on the face.
I know that tendrils are like tentacles
but made out of horse radish and understated.
I know you used to tell me I was in a cult,
and now I don't see you because I left one.
I know that in Austria they play the spoons
and call it antidisestablishmentarianism.
I know you'll never eat injera without seeing
Bowie shoot the nineball in my mouth.

This Word Has No English Equivalent Whatsoever
Originally published at Uut Poetry

Imagine the wailing of an octopus who eats mammals
admired by a smorgasbord of Carls sworn to Düsseldorf
the land of all expiration on Saturday evenings;
imagine you're living in a box of toys in the 18th century
and Robespierre is knocking on the lid saying "get out"
and no one's asking what you want in your ketchup
and no one's asking you how you stir or wants to know
how many fingersmiths you've wangled in the didgery of Neptune
to tell Albany the Pride Center is run by fishermen in 70s clothes
and no one's buying the peas that fell from the freezer, unclipped,
and scattered all over the floor of your quaffled pooch
to morgle in the lemmingrad of parquins.

*Title from **A First Dictionary and Grammar of Láadan** by Suzette Haden Elgin, page 98, the first sentence of the definition of "doroledim."*

Today
Originally published in Fusion: Ohio's Advocate for LGBT Issues

i gave you
my hemp rope
here you go
i said
i'm safe
you cried
we hugged

Treason Cantos (Bits of Bits of Years)
Part 2 originally published in 1947 Journal
Parts 7, 9, and 11 originally published in Right Hand Pointing Issue 97

1 (Listen)
Listen peacefully: the moon shines and doesn't care about the tracks on its face. My name has changed to Catherine and my gender to female. Freedom is incarceration; I can't live without it. The daybreak can be the most productive but it has not come, so find a way to eat. You used to keep me up at night; now you've shown your true colors. Thank God I was vaccinated against measles.

2 (12 Stops)
There should be a tax on doctors and hospitals that prescribe benzos. "I've driven through Ohio once before," they say. I write better in cursive when I'm drunk. 12 stops, then birds get busy with the morning. Is it worse? Pick a positive transitive verb. Get water, food, vitamins, and maybe more sleep. Local news anchors are the lowest form of life. Learn a new language and use it to help people.

3 (Slow Drip)
Slow drip from ten down to negative twenty. Pick a brand of shampoo, body wash or feminine hygiene product. I am thankful for not being at Safe Haven. Au bon pain is next to le pain quotidien, which is next to pret a manger. I can't go to the shelter; leave me alone. I don't understand why. Don't even walk past it. So-called "sensitivity" will not help. In spiritu transit.

4 (Laughter)
Laughter spills into the room, waking the sleeping child. Be peaceful. We're all sane here, and you're not. All is vanity. Learn the power of crazy powder: it pulverizes me, but that was pleasure and not business. The biggest motivator seems to me to be a fundamental inability to perceive the value in what most people value, so read literature and stay away from the bar, and tell your parents not to worry too much.

5 (Trapped)
I am dictating this poem out of my notebook to my friend, at George Washington University Psych Ward. This has happened more than once. I'm trapped. You said to me that being exhausted at the end of the day cures insomnia. I don't know. Every time I see a fire alarm, I think about pulling it. Even a small donation will probably still be suitable, especially in today's climate. Long be your scientific name. I'm not sure if there is anyone else for me. Let that shit go; you are not that important, Cate.

6 (Learn to Die)
Are stubbornness and inflexibility ego-based or genetic? I'm working at 7am on Capitol Hill. Can't stop writing. In suburbia as it is in the city, we learn to die with a constant rigor throughout our lifetime. You allow them to say that no one

cares. They put their things in order. You're not larger than life, and that's OK. Ultra virum vita. It was that bad.

7 (10 Stops)
10 stops. Freeverse is colonial. When you do it wrong, you go hungry. Why is that the policy? Good mental health is relative to the culture and civilization: there's an evolutionary advantage in being capable of remaining awake. This table has two legs, though you could say it has an infinite number of legs, one next to the other next to the other, so closely packed you'll need an axe to break them apart. When I first met you, you were orange; now you are more transparent. Where did that helmet come from? You seem agitated; do you need a pill?

8 (Hustling)
Hustling is not easy. It is frosty tonight. Pick an adjective/noun combination from a mythological text. I never seem to sleep. Maybe poetry, but not self-pity poetry. Bipolarity allows us to live in the true, wild world, although people from DC think Ohio is somewhere in the vicinity of Nebraska. They actually got it right. Every northern state picks some weird unknown city as its capital to mess with geography students. Why is it so hard to hustle if drugs are not involved?

9 (A Million Dollars)
¿Qué mirás? A million dollars spent on the inauguration of the mayor. I am there. Pick an adjective out of a self-help book. Thanks for the memories, everyone. Snow is becoming rain. It's fun, and intense, and intensely fun. Accent on the first syllable. Did not receive a copy. Don't try to question us; we've got thorazine shots.

10 (A Homeless Person)
A homeless person takes the bus to the center of the city, yet fools talk on and on. Total lack of empathy, apparently. I tried writing a poem without me in it, so I made it different from me, but it was only different in relation to me. It only took a moment and I was back. Dogs are loving and caring. What can I do to stay healthy? Learn languages. Try to get your purse back from St. Alban's. When the cellphone was created, I thought it wasn't necessary.

11 (New Friend)
Unbeknownst to me, you never left my side. You are so hot and cool and interesting; I want to write your book, new friend. The cameras, the mysterious fan letters, the music, they passed from an awkward adolescence to an even more awkward adulthood. So many days, months and years of effort, and so little time to throw it out. My neurotransmitters are firing blanks. People are too slow; after all, no one can see me in here. There's no way that they can stop it. Something about me is good at something.

12 (Bits of Bits of Years)
Red line train to Shady Grove, next stop: Judiciary Square. An arrogant sun god raises their nose. We've become slaves to our tools. Oh, no, nevermind. It's almost Friday and you are courage, strength, euphoria, loss of teeth and mental

instability. I can't stop. Bits of bits of years, bits of bits of years, bits of years, bits of years, years, years, little time, little time for me to throw it away. Sit with feelings. What does it mean when the heart is a house pet?

13 (Ohio)
Ohio is a center-right state in the center-right of the map. Pick a concept, mammal, or music genre. I lack a house and I'm human. If you are bigoted at the root, you need a radical transformation. We will make an effort to convince people not to damage names. Meow. Again the air freezes over. I can't explain why. Remember the Stanford Prison Experiment? Forgiveness is practical; you still have to deal with people.

14 (Nine Dollars)
Oh my God, I get it! Rick owes me $9. The race is not to the swift. When I started to get in touch with our friend, you showed up not long after. No one can fall asleep on the sober club's couch. The sun rises. I've driven around DC many times. I have needed a little extension. We're on TV!

15 (Star)
Please don't let me run out. Remember the pain. Pick a virtue. Life is inherently risky. The sun rises. Try new things. 42 toward Metro Center. I lack a home and I'm Catey. I'm not comfortable with being uncomfortable. Light years away a star explodes.

16 (Persephone)
In one version of the Persephone myth, Hades hypnotizes her into believing the underworld is a land of pleasure and joy, far better than the Earth could ever be, so every so often she begins to pine for it, forgetting there is nothing there but death. H Street and Madison Pl. Call now and you'll also receive a set of blank postcards from the recipient of your gift. Ice beats them in transition. West on Independence toward Capitol. The diary must be sold. A person who was not addicted to drugs would not sell their tablet for booze. The laughter is uproarious. Remember your haiku.

17 (Spirit)
I went to a bar to meet someone, and within minutes, I was being fingered by a man known only as Sexy. "Oh, you're a vegan?" they ask, turning away. Too much methane. All things fully functional, albeit slowed down and bloated from too much hard use. The child passes the ball through the hoop to their friend. Deliver me from poverty. Spirit not found. People can always lose their grip. Stay grounded while meeting long-term goals. Poetry is global.

18 (Coruscant)
The civic sickness establishes itself in Coruscant. Although modern innovations have made things possible that were once entirely unreasonable, the actual utility of such technology is less than optimal unless combined with further thermodynamic considerations. Kion vi rigardadas? I make a tongue from other tongues collected from other people's mouths. Write creative, mind-exercising poetry. I'd like to be high but I can't be. Rearrange my notebooks and pens as I twitch and my nose runs out. Don't be flaky. We run a loony bin, and we're never wrong. Find another way!

19 (Ur)
It's funny you should ask. Our story begins in the city of Ur some thousands of years ago. Trying to get into a shelter hotline early won't hurt. Double vowels are pronounced twice as long. They had some ideas; I will give them that. My goal is to write a villanelle and unclog my right ear. The price is worth paying. They begin to get warm. 30N towards Naylor Rd Station. My body wants to crumble.

20 (More)
A powerful sun graciously dries the rainclouds. Light lifts itself. The cold air gets weaker, except Massachusetts. Build a support system. Forgive my moochiness; I just want to do one. The stench of two days' binging seeps out your dick. David looked at Jonathan, puzzled. But wait, there's more!

26 Unexpected Places To Find Satan
Originally published at Uut Poetry

She scowled at the concept of "socks" when she got a puppy.
The very idea made her want to microwave pineapples.
Nail polish was something she didn't believe existed.
Now she's aware that the papers on her floor are covered in wasps.

It's like on one foot she has half of her pants,
but on the other she wants to hold onto snakes
and autographed poetry chapbooks.
The two cannot co-exist. One has to laugh at the sunset.

She either needs to completely repair her computer monitor
or sit in the light from her own mobile phone.

Unite!
Originally published at Uut Poetry

I am stumbling over lionesses, trying to find a pig from ‘02.
They are roaring, "Let me out!" and "*Saluton al la mondo!*"
They hate their cages of flesh, believing it's better to die than be.
I don't understand why things Just Work when I don't want them to,
and don't Just Work when I want them to. Give me more Control.
Give me all the partitions and let me wipe them clean,
then we'll start a new life we forgot to encrypt,
and all the perverted chasers will watch us through the mysterious webcam light
that flashed when I wasn't expecting it. Even you deserve better.
Especially you, grateful woman in my head.

uutku
Originally published at Uut Poetry

1
teabags
tingling
heavy eyelids

2
pot of coffee
chipping nail polish
sans coups d’État

3
without grandma
hardly an embassy
on Twitter

Vests
Originally published in The Lake, April 2015 issue.
Originally written at Union Station in early 2015, exact date unknown.

there are a bunch of people
standing around
in union station
doing nothing

some of them
have on yellow vests
that read
POLICE

they keep telling
the people who have no vests
they have to move
the area is closed

that is their job
to make life
just that much harder
for the unvested

Violation

Originally published in cc&d magazine volume 254, Mar/Apr 2015

The spike: the most ripping of rips, over and over, harder and harder. The screams. The attempts by the perpetrator to make it sexy. The attempts by the victim to cope. The blood, the feces, the lost control. The traitorous orgasm.

watching him with her
Originally published in Verbatim Found Poetry

she sang
and he danced–
he is mad
or I am much mistaken

From The Philosophy of Grammar by Otto Jespersen (New York: The Norton Library, 1965), p. 90.

What to Do When You're Homeless
Originally published in The Lake, April 2015 issue. Originally written in Washington, DC in early 2015, exact date unknown.

Don't freeze.
Get a big bag for your stuff.
A suitcase if you can afford it;
Otherwise buy a box of garbage bags,
Double-bag your stuff
And throw the rest of the box inside.
Don't freeze.
Make sure to call the shelter hotline
If it's going to be below freezing.
They'll come pick you up.
They're nice like that.
They don't want you to freeze.
When you get to the shelter,
Spray down your cot with lice and bedbug spray.
It's either your hair or the lice.
It's self-defense.
Don't freeze;
When you wake up, head to a day shelter.
Try to get into a program so you won't freeze.
Be patient. Things take time.
Accept any money you're offered.
Remember you're not arguing with your brother
over who is picking up the check at Trop d'argent.
You're homeless, so show some humility.
Take the damn money.
Take it,
and don't freeze.

Why Pineapples Cause Vivid Dreams
Originally published at Uut Poetry

A tall skinny man with long brown hair and a big, wide, cheesy, affected smile, wearing a heavy sweatshirt with a big red C on it, is standing on the dock of a large ship. I approach him and say, "What I find interesting about near-death experiences is that people experience a sense of unconditional love and acceptance. I really need that." Still smiling his big wide smile, he holds his arms out wide and hugs me, then whispers in my ear: "I hate you." With infinitely self-perpetuating wire cutters, I achieve everything I've ever wanted, and suddenly I'm happy, although I wonder if it's valid.

Yahweh's Butt
Originally published at Uut Poetry

It's said that Moses once saw Yahweh's butt,
making him incapable of sex with
anyone with no equally fine old ass-
and such a person's truly hard to find.

In truth, most people have ungodly butts-
surely you would not contest that, had you
basis for some comparison, which you don't.
Only Moses sees our ugly side.

Ugliness follows from our expectations of beautiful
Spring-like weather after climate change has
caused devastation to our understanding of suitable
and non-hibernal weather, even in
the season that we know as Spring and love
even more than we love our God's buttocks.

You Said
Originally published in Fusion: Ohio's Advocate for LGBT Issues

define your own reality
so i defined a world where i could fly
and flew halfway across the little cuyahoga

your fetishes
Originally published in The Opiate, Spring 2016, Vol. 5, p. 45.

if you spit on my face
do it when you are
walking past me
not when I am
naked

Catherine B. Krause is a queer, transgender, and neurodivergent poet whose work has appeared in *Beltway Poetry Quarterly*, *Gargoyle*, *The Opiate*, and *Rabbit Ears: TV Poems (NYQ Books 2015)*, among other places. Because none of these publishers demand exclusive rights to the poems, Catherine releases every one of her published poems into the public domain as CC Zero. Occasionally Catherine also writes prose, which is covered by the same CC Zero public domain dedication.

In the past (2014-2016) Catherine released her work under CC-BY 4.0, but changed this to CC Zero in 2016.